DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 417 450 CS 509 792

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| AUTHOR | Gill, Jerry H. |
| TITLE | If a Chimpanzee Could Talk and Other Reflections on Language Acquisition. |
| ISBN | ISBN-0-8165-1669-3 |
| PUB DATE | 1997-00-00 |
| NOTE | 171p. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | University of Arizona Press, 1230 North Park Avenue, Suite 102, Tucson, AZ 85719 (cloth: ISBN-0-8165-1668-5; paperback: ISBN-0-8165-1669-3, $17.95), |
| PUB TYPE | Books (010) -- Opinion Papers (120) |
| EDRS PRICE | Document Not Available from EDRS. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Autism; Case Studies; *Cultural Context; *Language Acquisition; *Language Role; *Speech Acts; Young Children |
| IDENTIFIERS | Chimpanzees; Keller (Helen); *Language Functions; Whorf (Benjamin Lee) |

ABSTRACT

This book relates several case studies of language acquisition--for example, chimpanzees "learning" to speak at a higher level than so-called 'wolf' children and a father and mother who, against the advice of professionals, force their way into the closed world of an autistic son--to examine the threshold of language, that point "between speech and not quite speech." The book provides accounts of the deaf and blind Helen Keller, of chimpanzees like Washoe, and of feral children such as Victor, the "wild child of Aveyron," and puts a new spin on their stories. The book asks when the miracle that most people take for granted, speech, starts, and where that power to transform perception and action into thought comes from. It asks the reader to think again about how a person says what he or she means, how a person means what he or she says, and where it all starts in the first place. Following a preface and an introduction, chapters in the book are: (1) If a Chimpanzee Could Talk; (2) Wolf Children and Language Acquisition; (3) The Case of Helen Keller; (4) Autism and Language Acquisition; (5) Psychology, Language, and Knowledge; (6) Forked Tongues, Otherness, and Understanding; (7) Language and Reality: The Work of Benjamin Lee Whorf; and (8) A Point of Departure. (NKA)

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